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Corporate Plan Output: Traffic Signs and Markings	

The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the reasons for adopting a 70km/h speed limit along the Christchurch City sections of the Summit Road between Godley Head and Gebbies Pass.

BACKGROUND

Councillor Erin Baker has asked that the committee consider the appropriateness of the existing 70 km/h speed limit along the Summit Road given the number of people using the Summit Road on foot or on cycle. The Summit Road Protection Society has also indicated support for a lowering of the speed limit.

SPEED LIMITS

Councillors will be aware of the processes required for setting speed limits in New Zealand. There are two basic speed limits:

- A general 50km/h speed limit for built up urban areas.
- A 100km/h (open road) speed limit for rural areas.

Bylaw speed limits for under 50km/h, 60km/h or 80km/h can be set by Road Controlling authorities. The existing 70km/h limit along the Christchurch City sections of the Summit Road was set by Gazette Notice as a result of the 1996 Council review of speed limits in the city. Prior to this the speed limit along the Summit Road was the general open road speed limit of 100km/h.

THE SUMMIT ROAD

Most motorists travelling the Summit Road are responsible and have respect for the ruggedness of the terrain. The road is a series of tight bends with little opportunity for drivers to accelerate along the straights in between. The 70km/h speed **limit** is a **practical** maximum speed for most drivers. In 1996 the Council felt that the existing speed limit was more appropriate than the open road (100km/h) limit that still applies to sections of the Summit Road under the control of the Selwyn and Banks Peninsula District Councils.

Very few of the sharp bends along the Summit Road can be negotiated at over 50km/h. However, that is not to say that 50km/h should be the **maximum** speed that drivers can travel along a route that is completely rural in nature.

The City Streets unit has recently commissioned an existing road-safety audit/inspection of the Summit Road between Godley Head and Gebbies Pass. Remedial action is being taken to address road deficiencies that have been brought to the Council's attention and we will build on work that has been carried out in previous years to remove some of the hazards that were identified during a previous black spot analysis. Delineation of the

existing roadway was seen as being very important and was the main finding of the latest audit. One of the suggestions of the audit was that the speed limit be reviewed. Consideration has been given to changing the speed limit. However, the decision made by the Council in association with the NZAA, the LTSA and Road Transport Forum in 1996 is considered to be appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Although most sections of the Summit Road(between Godley Head and Gebbies Pass) are often used by people on foot or on cycle it would not be appropriate to seek the setting of a speed limit lower than 70km/h. When setting the existing speed limit the Council took into consideration the recreational use of the roadway, the mountainous terrain and the rural nature of the road environment.

There is an absence of speed limit signs along the Summit Road. This is deliberate in that every encouragement is given to motorists to drive to the conditions rather than to a **maximum** speed. 50/70km/h and open road (100km/70km/h) signs are posted only at places along the road where the controlling authorities need to advise drivers of a change in speed limit.

The existing speed limit has been reviewed and discussed with the NZAA and LTSA resulting in support for the retention of the 70km/h limit.

Recommendation: That the Committee reaffirm its support of the current 70km/h speed limit along the Christchurch City sections of the Summit Road between Godley Head and Gebbies Pass.

Chairman's

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Committee reaffirm its support of the current 70km/h speed limit along the Christchurch City sections of the Summit Road between Godley Head and Gebbies Pass.
 2. That subject to the implementation of work to remedy the road deficiencies identified in the current safety audit, including the erection of suitable signs to advise motorists of the likely presence of joggers and cyclists where appropriate.